DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 275 817 CE 045 346

TITLE	Retraining Adults. Responding to the Educational/Training Needs of Unemployed Adults in Coventry. FEU/REPLAN Project Report.
INSTITUTION	Further Education Unit, London (England).
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-948621-33-8
PUB DATE	Aug 86
NOTE	85p.; Survey form has small print.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; *Adults; *Curriculum Development; *Electronics; Foreign Countries; *Needs Assessment; *Retraining; Self Actualization; *Unemployment
IDENTIFIERS	*England (Coventry)

ABSTRACT

This booklet describes a project centered at Tile Hill College in Coventry (England) that set out to provide relevant courses for unemployed adults. An introduction outlines project aims and an action plan. Section II on the context of the project is concerned with the sector forecasts for industry, the economic environment, and unemployment. The data handling section deals with methods of creating a data base, data collection (especially survey work), and data processing. The focus is investigation of the basic educational/training needs of unemployed adults in Coventry and identification of strategies that were most likely to satisfy those needs. Findings are reported indicating a need for personalized stocktaking and preferences for clear goals, group approaches, proper valuation and exploitation of experience, collaborative teaching styles, and vocational relevance. Section IV describes the development and testing of two pilot courses--electronics and self-development. Section V is a brief report on other initiatives for unemployed adults that were also undertaken at the college during the duration of the project. The concluding section reviews the major factors of the project: identification of needs, outreach and recruitment, adapting college structures, changing policy, and curriculum development. Instruments are appended. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED275817

FEU/REPLAN

PROJECT REPORT

RETRAINING ADULTS

Responding to the educational/training needs of unemployed adults in Coventry

CE045346

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J Mansell

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Further Education Unit

REPLAN

REPLAN is a programme to promote the development of education opportunities for the adult unemployed.

REPLAN aims to help those who provide education by identifying and publicising the most effective ways and means of meeting the educational needs of the unemployed, and by encouraging closer collaboration between the various providing agencies.

The programme is funded by the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office; certain elements of the programme are also supported financially by the Manpower Services Commission. On behalf of REPLAN, the FEU and the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) are managing complementary programmes of development and NIACE is employing and managing an advisory team of field officers led by a national co-ordinator.

Staff development programmes are being organised by NIACE in collaboration with the Regional Advisory Councils for further education, with participants drawn from a wide range of institutions and agencies in the statutory and voluntary sectors.

Education Support Grants are being allocated to many local education authorities to strengthen the planning and co-ordination of provision for unemployed adults in their areas.

For further information on REPLAN, contact:

The REPLAN Office (DES) *tel: 01-934 0612*
Philip Barnard (FEU) *tel: 01-934 9415*
Bill Boaden (NIACE) *tel: 0533 551451*

ISBN 0 948621 33 8
August 1986

© Further Education Unit (FEU) 1986
Reproduction in whole or in part of the contents of this publication is authorised for all non-commercial educational purposes, provided the source is acknowledged.
All rights reserved with regard to commercial reproduction of the contents

Printed by The Chameleon Press Limited,
5-25 Burr Road, Wandsworth, London SW18 4SG

FEU

FURTHER EDUCATION UNIT

Elizabeth House York Road London SE1 7PH Telephone Direct line 01-934
Switchboard 01-934 9000

Chief Education Officers,
Principals of FHE Establishments,
Secretaries of Regional and FE
Examining Bodies,
Press and other Interested
Institutions/Individuals.

Dear Sir/Madam,

RETRAINING ADULTS

This booklet describes a project centred at an LEA college in Coventry, which set out to provide relevant courses for unemployed adults.

The project commenced in 1982 and was funded under PICKUP. As such, it anticipated many of the concerns and problems associated with providing education/training for the unemployed well in advance of the REPLAN initiative.*

Faced with a traumatic reduction in Coventry's prosperity, and in MSC TOPS courses, Tile Hill College decided that it would have to do its own thing with respect to serving the needs of the unemployed. The FEU project was a start and Section V explains that it had a catalytic effect in promoting an increased awareness of the college towards the provision of a range of services and courses for unemployed adults. Through this project the development of two specialist courses was undertaken after a careful analysis of needs. A survey of 1,000 unemployed people led to extended interviews which revealed a need for personalised stocktaking and preferences for clear goals, group approaches (but without 'competition'), proper valuation and exploitation of experience, collaborative teaching styles (not 'lecturing') and vocational relevance.

Two contrasting courses were developed and tested: Electronics and Self-Development, one in city centre, off-site premises providing convenient, friendly accommodation for the reorientation and confidence building essential to many unemployed people.

The institutional base and the local authority's supportive policy provided a favourable context for the development of these courses. And so here we have an early example of successful planning for the unemployed, to be commended to those many more in adult education institutions and colleges now engaged in similar enterprises.

Yours faithfully,

Jack Mansell

JACK MANSELL
Chief Officer

* REPLAN is a programme funded by the Department of Education and Science and the Welsh Office which aims to promote the development of educational opportunities for unemployed adults.

A Company limited by guarantee Registered Office Elizabeth House York Road London SE1 7PH Registered Number 986702 England

CONTENTS

		Page
	Acknowledgements	vi
I	Introduction	1
II	The economic environment : a context for unemployment	3
III	Investigation of educational/ training needs	5
IV	'Special course' developments	22
V	Other college initiatives for the unemployed	40
VI	Review and conclusions	50
	References and further reading	62
	Appendices	
	A: The survey questionnaire	64
	B: Details of initial postal survey	68
	C: Details of home-visit interview survey	71
	D: Counselling	74
	Postscript	76

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the following for all their help.

Steering Committee

Dr H E Avery (Chairman), Principal, Tile Hill College of Further Education, Coventry

Professor H Bennett, Head of Department of Psychology, University of Warwick

R Hilborne, Principal Lecturer, Tile Hill College of Further Education, Coventry

F Welsh, Head of Department of Community Education, Tile Hill College of Further Education, Coventry

I Mallows and D Fisher, Coventry Jobcentre

R Norman and Ms M Chadwick, Development Officers, FEU

G Ian Gibbs, Project Leader

Representative of the Director of Education, Coventry

Mrs C Bain, Lecturer, Tile Hill College of Further Education, Coventry

T Watson, Lecturer, Tile Hill College of Further Education, Coventry

L Bashford, Adviser for Further Education, Coventry LEA

A Clifford, Community Education Development Centre, Coventry

Others

Dr K Halstead, and I Liddell, Computing Centre, University of Warwick

G Davies, Registrar, Tile Hill College of Further Education, Coventry

Mrs M Starky, Typist, Coventry

The administrative staff at Tile Hill College of Further Education, Coventry

My thanks are also due to the following members and former members of staff of Tile Hill College:

Dr S Laugier, Lecturer, part-time
K Farthing, Senior lecturer
M Freeman, Senior lecturer
Miss L Tilley, CEP
D Thomason, CEP
R Grant, CEP
R Bartlett, Lecturer

Plus many others who contributed, both formally and informally including particularly:

Mrs E Varnsih, Lecturer
Mrs P Vallins, Lecturer, part-time
N Harte, Lecturer

The Unemployed

All those concerned with this project owe a great deal to the many unemployed adults in Coventry who willingly participated in surveys and pilot courses.

G Ian Gibbs
Project Leader

1. INTRODUCTION

Aims of the project

1. The aims of the project were:

(i) to investigate the basic educational needs of local adult workers from the lower occupational status groups who are currently unemployed;

(ii) to develop curricula and curriculum materials, teaching techniques and learning environments likely to induce successful learning with the target group;

(iii) to evaluate the materials and strategies developed through a pilot programme of courses offered to a sample population of the target group.

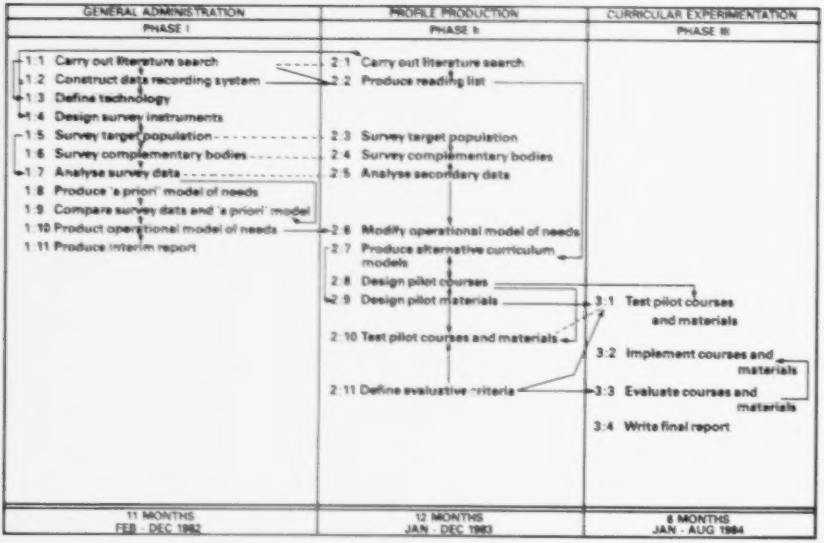
The action plan

2. The project had three phases. Although each phase shared some objectives with other phases, it was possible to define them each in terms of a broad function, as:

Phase I	General administration
Phase II	Profile production
Phase III	Curricular experimentation

An action plan for the project was produced as shown in figure 1. This action plan reflected the project tasks and the three phase management regime.

Figure 1 Action Plan


GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
PHASE I
1.1 Carry out literature search
1.2 Construct data recording system
1.3 Define technology
1.4 Design survey instruments
1.5 Survey target population
1.6 Survey complementary bodies
1.7 Analyse survey data
1.8 Produce 'a priori' model of needs
1.9 Compare survey data and 'a priori' model
1.10 Product operational model of needs
1.11 Produce interim report
PROFILE PRODUCTION
PHASE II
2.1 Carry out literature search
2.2 Produce reading list
2.3 Survey target population
2.4 Survey complementary bodies
2.5 Analyse secondary data
2.6 Modify operational model of needs
2.7 Produce alternative curriculum models
2.8 Design pilot courses
2.9 Design pilot materials
2.10 Test pilot courses and materials
2.11 Define evaluative criteria
CURRICULAR EXPERIMENTATION
PHASE III
3.1 Test pilot courses and materials
3.2 Implement courses and materials
3.3 Evaluate courses and materials
3.4 Write final report
11 MONTHS
FEB - DEC 1982
12 MONTHS
JAN - DEC 1983
8 MONTHS
JAN - AUG 1984

3. In this report, the section on the context of the project is concerned with the sector forecasts for industry, the economic environment and unemployment. The data handling section is concerned with methods of creating a data base, data collection (especially survey work) and data processing. There is then a consolidation of the results of the surveys and the pilot courses and a brief report on other initiatives for unemployed adults which were also undertaken at the college during the duration of this project. The concluding section seeks to review the project by drawing attention to some of the most interesting outcomes including significant changes in attitude, policy and the curricula within the college.

II. THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT: A CONTEXT FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

4. Traditionally the West Midlands has been one of the most dynamic and prosperous regions in the United Kingdom - this was largely due to its specialisation in the growth sectors of manufacturing, particularly motor vehicle manufacture. However, since the early 1970s these industries have been in decline, a situation exacerbated by the international recession of the latter part of the decade and the early 1980s. In the ten years from 1971, the Gross Domestic Product per head in the region fell from 102.7% of the national average to 90.6%. No other region in Britain performed so badly. [1]

5. Sited centrally within the region, Coventry is a city with a population of some 310,000 (1981). Variously described as '..a boom town...' and '...symbol of the region's post-war prosperity', Coventry exhibits what is known as 'faltering growth'.

Coventry's prosperity was largely based on manufacturing industry. 57% of employment in 1978 was in the manufacturing sector, a greater proportion than occurred in any other city of a similar size. Even more significant was the fact that over 30% of these jobs were in the automobile industry.

Unlike other places in the UK, it seems probable that industrial structure has been one of the main causal elements in the decline and de-industrialisation of Coventry. Indeed, the retrenchment of the automobile industry is the single most important factor in the city's decaying economy. Final economic collapse generated by faltering growth was dramatic and sudden. Although Coventry is not the only city showing massive de-industrialisation, the speed at which it happened is unprecedented.

Coventry's unemployment crisis

6. Throughout 1983 and 1984 unemployment in Coventry remained fairly static at between 16-17%, or some 38,500 people. This figure has remained consistently above the national average. There had been a steady increase in the level of unemployment since 1960 until 1974. In that year the rate of increase took off from about 2½% until, in 1976, it had risen to 7½%. By 1983 over 15% of adults were unemployed and this was an increasing trend. At the same time the proportion of those who were over 55 had been falling. More disturbing, perhaps, is the realisation that in the third quarter of 1982, some 70% of the unemployed had been out of work for over six months and 50% had been jobless for over a year.

III. INVESTIGATION OF EDUCATIONAL/TRAINING NEEDS

7. The purpose of the research in this project was to investigate the basic educational/training needs of unemployed adults in Coventry and to identify strategies which were most likely to satisfy those needs. To accomplish this it was necessary to gather information, process it for storage and transmission, analyse it and employ it as a basis for making decisions and recommendations, and for evaluating the outcomes. The research data had first to be gathered, then processed and finally disseminated as illustrated in figure 2.

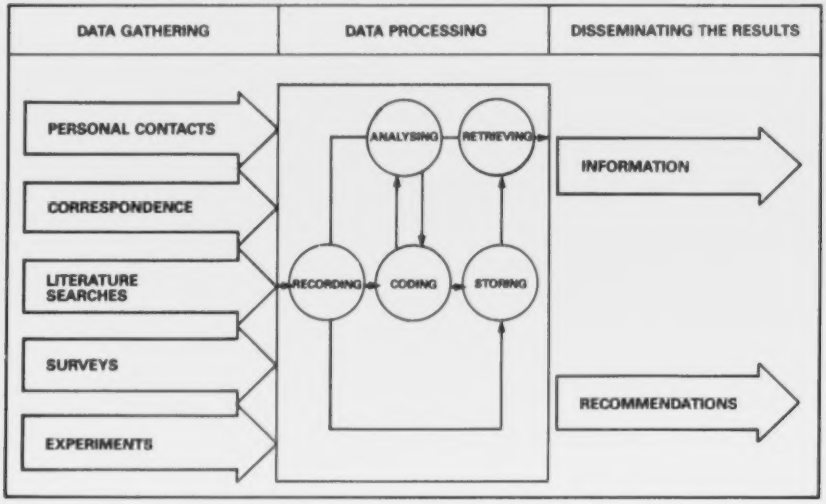


Figure 2 Summary of Investigation

8. In practice, the project involved defining the target population in relation to their background, current status and perceived needs. Background was explored using the variables of identity, family, educational/ training history and career. Current status was described in terms of identity, geographical location, interests and social activity. Perceived needs were centred on aims, aspirations, capabilities, and constraints. Definition of the target population was largely undertaken from the perspective of the people themselves, although cognisance of the views of a variety of experts and local and national organisations concerned with unemployment was taken. The opinions of the members of the research team were also taken into account.

Data gathering

Personal contacts

9. Personal contacts were made with a number of people. These contacts can be classified into several broad categories:

- those with specialised knowledge of the then current employment situation
- those with specialised knowledge of future employment prospects
- those already making educational provision for unemployed adults
- those with specialised knowledge of research methodology
- those with specialised subject knowledge
- members of the target population.

These contacts were made by receiving visitors, making

visits, attending conferences and meetings and guidance/counselling sessions. Considerable importance was placed on the contacts made by teaching on courses involving unemployed adults.

The most significant data collected was from direct and sustained contact with members of the target population. Guidance/counselling sessions and interviews generated much of value. However, the prime source of information arose from teaching classes of unemployed adults, i.e. adult basic education, new skills courses, and the pilot courses in electronics and self-development described later in this report. Correspondence with a range of individuals and organisations proved a fruitful source of information of a similar nature to that obtained by personal contact.

Literature search

10. A wide-ranging literature search was undertaken. An examination of journals was carried out by the research team throughout the project. A commercial press cuttings agency was also employed to locate relevant articles and news items on a national and provincial basis. Use was made of existing data bases by commissioning computer searches for relevant references. The data base 'SYLIST' at the National Institute of Adult Education was searched using the facilities of the Computer Centre at Leicester University. The British Library carried out computer searches of two data bases - 'ERIC' and 'PSYCHABS'. Arrangements were also made to tap the enormous resources available to 'EURONET DIANE' should they have proved necessary. However, the spread of the search pattern proved more than adequate for our needs. A collection of reprints of the most useful references was established.

Surveys

11. The main thrust of Phase 1 of the project involved the

use of a series of surveys to seek to establish the educational/training needs of the target population. In the first instance, a small team of college staff, using a pilot questionnaire, visited the Jobcentre and on a random basis interviewed about 100 unemployed people. In addition, the local primary school and the local secondary school passed on the pilot questionnaire to parents who were unemployed. The answers received assisted the college in designing a fuller questionnaire which was used in the main survey. This questionnaire is included as Appendix A.

12. Arrangements were made with the Coventry Jobcentre so that a sample for survey could be drawn from the population registered as unemployed. This arrangement required the approval of the Regional Office of the MSC. (It should be noted that it will not be possible to make use of this source in the future as the Register of Unemployed no longer exists. However, it may be possible to come to a similar arrangement with the Benefits Office of the DHSS.) The original sample of 1,000 unemployed was obtained by taking every twenty-fifth person from the register, and represented 4% of the unemployed adults in Coventry. Since the register of names was filed according to the occupational status groups, the survey population was considered to be a representative sample of the total unemployed population of Coventry.

13. The initial survey consisted of sending the questionnaire by post to all one thousand. An incentive in the form of draw prizes was offered to stimulate a response. A response rate of 29.2% was achieved. Further details of the methods adopted can be found in Appendix B.

14. This was followed up by a second survey carried out using the questionnaire as a basis for an interview undertaken during home visits. This part of the project was supported by the MSC through their Community Enterprise Programme which funded the

employment of three research workers to carry out these interviews. A further 43% of the original sample was enabled to respond in this way. Therefore the combined postal and home visits results gave a total response rate of 72.2%. Details of this part of the survey are set out in Appendix C.

15. A final in-depth survey was undertaken on a selected population of the original sample in order to amplify the information already received and obtain data not covered in the questionnaire. In total, a further fifty open-ended interviews were carried out.

16. The three surveys attacked the problem of data gathering on two broad fronts, that is, probability and non-probability sampling, using the same survey population. It was felt that this approach would maximise the reliability of the data collected. It should be noted that the in-depth survey was decided upon after completion of the other surveys in order to expand the information obtained at this point.

Curriculum development

17. A considerable amount of data was also gathered as a result of the experimental curricula. Such experiments were concerned with the design of courses specifically aimed at meeting the needs of the adult unemployed. Data was gathered before and during the design stage.

18. Some data was gathered from an experimental course being funded by the MSC. This exercise was aimed at the target population specified as central to this project. Three colleges - Henley College of Further Education, Coventry Technical College and Tile Hill College of Further Education - were involved. The aim was to provide a 'taster' course so that participants could assess whether a particular curricular area offered employment possibilities for them. Three major areas were involved: catering, construction and motor

vehicle engineering work. Some basic education and some work on computer appreciation and self-employment were undertaken. The basis of the course was practical. Involvement in the planning, running and evaluation of this course provided experience on which to base the later pilot courses forming part of this project. Details of the course and its results are available from Tile Hill College.

19. Early survey results, as expected, revealed a need for retraining in vocational areas. Given the strong engineering content of West Midlands industry, and the popular notion that future economic recovery lay in the development of new technologies, it was not surprising that many of those in the sample identified new technology as the area in which they wanted retraining. As a consequence, the research team identified the following topics as a response to expressed needs:

- introduction to new technologies
- introduction to electronics
- modern materials
- introduction to information technology
- biotechnology
- automation in the office
- robotics

20. However, within the survey results there was a body of data which pointed to a demand for other types of retraining. A substantial number of those interviewed (i.e. more than one-third) wished to be retrained for work in social services and community care, and almost two-thirds gave as their main criterion for the quality of the course its ability to 'give them an interest' and 'keep their minds active'. There was also considerable interest expressed in leisure courses where creative activity (including photography, which may, in the context of an industrial area, be seen as a 'safe' creative activity) featured prominently alongside the more conventional sport and physical

activities. These factors, and a demand from more than one half of the sample evenly spread across all age categories for educational guidance and counselling, led the course team to the conclusion that what was being expressed was a need for a more personalised stock-taking approach than is represented by retraining courses in the new technologies. This conclusion was massively reinforced by the extended interviews carried out as the third stage of the data gathering.

21. A second strand was thus established and the course team responded by developing course materials for one course representing each of the two strands. These courses were:

An introduction to electronics
A programme for self-development

The electronics course was given an initial trial run on a group basis in a flat in the city centre. After some minor amendments, the course was given a second trial with students on a home study basis - the situation for which it was designed. The self-development course was given a pilot trial on a group basis in the same flat. Section IV gives a more detailed description of the development of the two courses.

Survey results

22. Survey results were obtained from the initial postal survey, the secondary house-visit survey and the tertiary in-depth interview survey. The survey results acted as a major input to curriculum development. There was also a spin-off from the surveys in the form of counselling and educational advice given to participants in the surveys.

23. The answers obtained to the twenty-six questions (see Appendix A) in both the initial postal survey and the house-visit survey are available in a form which also

shows the responses from males and females. With the help of the computer, it was also possible to show the responses according to both age distribution and marital status. These responses, together with the results of the follow-up interviews with the unemployed in the in-depth survey, are also available on request from the college.

24. When the surveys were carried out it was found that there were more registered unemployed men than women, of the order of just over two to one. This finding is in line with those of other surveys*. It has, however, been pointed out that there was no reliable estimate of the number of women unemployed because many of them did not register as such. As there is no longer a requirement for anyone to register as unemployed, future research will be even more difficult.

25. Approximately a third of those surveyed were single and nearly 8% were divorced or separated. Cross-tabulation showed that there were more single people under the age of 25 and more over the age of 35 were married than forecast.

26. The type of school attended was, as expected, very significant in most cases. Some 18% went to elementary schools, about a quarter attended secondary modern and a third went to comprehensive schools. Attendance patterns within this framework are related to age. The type of school last attended reflects the changes in educational provision over several decades. [The residual 24% attended grammar schools, direct grant, public and private schools, specials schools, had no formal schooling or were educated outside the United Kingdom.]

---

* Details of these and other references are given on pages 62-63.

27. The legal minimum school-leaving age has risen among the age group with which this study is concerned from 14 to 16. Over half the sample left at 15 or less. Girls were more likely to have stayed at school after the minimum leaving age. Since the Second World War people have tended to stay at school beyond the minimum leaving age, although this trend appears to be changing for those under the age of 24.

28. The age range distributions (see figure 3, page 14) of those taking part in the surveys showed a split in the normal pattern. There was a very considerable peak in the age range 20 to 34 - some 49%. This trend tailed off through the age groups but a second peak appeared in the 55 to 64 group. The strongest factor affecting what happens to the unemployed is age.

29. Well over half the survey population left school without formal qualifications. The most common qualification was CSE. The percentage holding qualifications falls in inverse relation to age. Females had more and higher qualifications than males.

30. The majority of the population completed their schooling without major interruption; about 15% had some break in attendance (see figure 4, page 14). Some of the interruptions were related to the Second World War and hence occurred with greater frequency in the 45+ age group.

31. Nearly half the sample had attended post-school courses and over 80% of these had completed their courses. Females were more likely to have attended courses than males. Similarly the under 35s were more likely to have been on courses than those who were older. Over 70% of the courses were full-time day courses with the rest split between part-time day and evening courses. A quarter of the courses attended resulted in no qualifications, whilst a third led to success in the examinations of the Royal Society of Arts or the City & Guilds of London Institute.

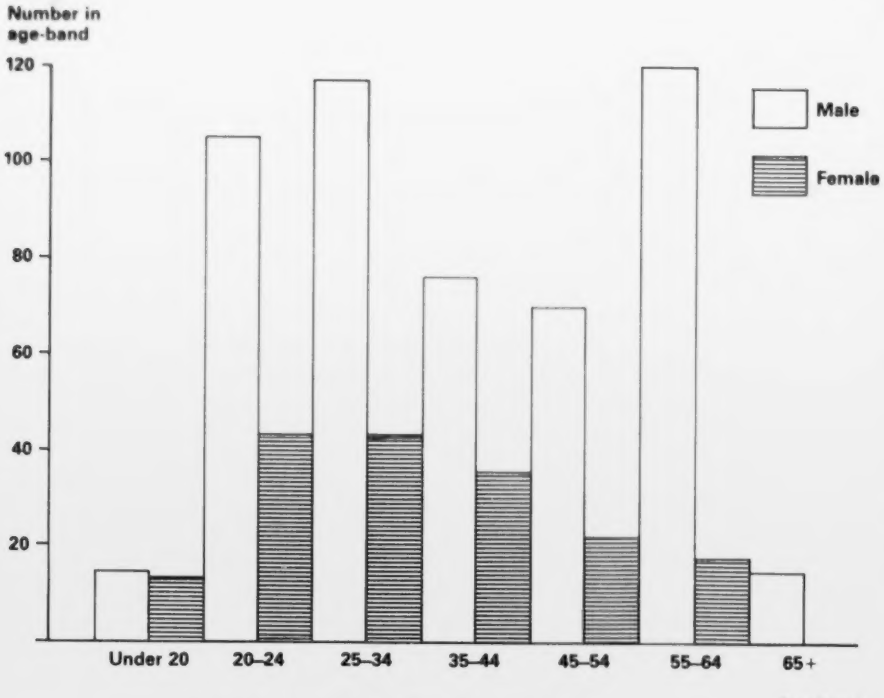


Figure 3 Age Distribution of Survey Sample

Figure 4: Last School Attended

	Total (722)	Male (511)	Female (211)
	%	%	%
Elementary / All age	18.3	21.1	11.4
Secondary Modern	24.6	24.7	24.6
Grammar / Technical	6.4	5.7	8.1
Comprehensive	32.5	29.9	38.9
Direct Grant / Public / Private	1.1	1.2	0.9
Special School	2.4	2.7	1.4
Overseas	12.9	12.9	12.8
Unspecified	1.8	1.8	1.9

32. A third of the sample had been unemployed for less than a year whilst two-thirds were classed as long-term unemployed, using the definition produced by the MSC.

33. The employment history of the sample shows that females tended to have worked in non-manual jobs whereas men tended to be skilled manual workers. The latter was particularly true for the over 55s. Those under 35 tended to have been employed in non-manual work. It is worth noting that this is a change from the position established just a decade ago. Over 84% were actively seeking work, those under 25 being most energetic in this quest. Many of the post-55 age group were not active in their search for employment, having accepted that they were unlikely ever to work again. In general terms, people were seeking jobs in the areas in which they had previously been employed; this applied especially to work in the motor vehicle industry, despite the facts of industrial decline[1].

34. Nearly half the sample thought that more education would improve their employment prospects. Over 40% of those wanting educational help wanted to follow GCE 'O' level courses, the majority in maths and English, although a wide range of other subjects was also mentioned. Almost 30% wanted help with basic maths and English. Nearly 20% wanted GCE 'A' level courses, with a preference for English. Finally, 4% wanted to take degree courses. Females and those under 35 were more likely to respond positively to the idea of an educational course than others.

35. About 60% of those surveyed wished to take skills-based courses. A third of these wanted courses in the social sciences and in the area of caring. Nearly as many wanted training in motor vehicle engineering. Over 20% were interested in business studies and nearly as many in electronics, computing and general engineering.

Most of the other courses requested could be loosely categorised as either 'engineering' or 'business'

courses, although there was a substantial number interested in construction and some in catering. Those under the age of 35 were the most likely to require skills training. Men wanted engineering skills, whilst women requested 'business' and 'social care' skills.

36. Two-thirds of those questioned expressed interest in a wide range of leisure subjects. Men requested gardening, photography and car maintenance, whilst women preferred cookery, dressmaking and art and craft. The under 25s were more interested in sport and physical education. About 40% of the sample, especially those under 35, expressed an interest in obtaining educational advice.

37. Over 36% of the population stated that they would prefer courses to be run in local FE colleges. Few showed a preference for Working Men's Clubs. Women were more likely to select schools and community colleges or home study whereas men were more likely to choose skills centres. Under 25s preferred colleges of further education whilst those over 45 positively disliked them.

38. A range of reasons was given for wanting educational and training courses (see figure 5). Only about 10% wanted to improve their academic qualifications. Nearly 25% wanted to do a course 'to keep their minds active'. Over 40% wanted to undertake training to get work, give themselves a pastime and to provide the chance to meet people. Men were more concerned with getting or changing jobs whilst women's reasons were concerned with meeting people, keeping their minds active and providing a pastime. Those under 25 had job-orientated reasons whilst those over 55 were less pre-occupied with employment.

Figure 5: Reasons for wanting educational/training courses

	Total (722)	Male (511)	Female (211)
	%	%	%
Most important reason			
Help me change jobs	11.1	12.5	8.1
Help me to get work	41.0	41.3	37.0
Keep my mind active/ give me an interest	24.5	23.1	29.4
Give me a pastime / hobby	2.6	2.7	2.8
Give me better qualifications	9.5	9.2	11.4
Give me a chance to meet people	4.3	4.1	6.2
Help me to be more active in the community	1.4	1.0	2.4
Help me obtain a higher education place	0.4	0.4	0.4
Unspecified	5.2	5.7	2.3

39. Various difficulties in attending courses were identified, which can be classified as financial, organisational and personal. Almost half those surveyed reported difficulties with finding the cost of travel and fares. Even more stated that they would have difficulty in finding course fees. Men said they were more likely to suffer financial difficulties than women. Family commitments were largely concerned with children and other dependants. Women had a greater tendency to encounter such difficulties. About 20% are faced with the organisational problem of times which are inconvenient. Personal problems which act as barriers to course attendance include poor health and lack of self-confidence.

40. The vast majority of those interested in further education[2] or training are willing to devote between five and twenty hours per week to taking courses, whereas about 10% favour less than five hours.

41. Nearly 70% of those surveyed were prepared to discuss the survey further. There was a greater willingness to continue with discussions in the under-25 group.

The extended interview survey

42. The third survey undertaken was the extended interview survey. The free 'conversational' nature of the interviews allowed views and opinions to be developed and these were reflected in the extensive and complex audio-recordings made. Analysis of the transcripts has proved difficult but extremely worthwhile. The main findings of immediate relevance follow but much more material still lies locked in the transcripts.

Information from the transcripts was analysed to give results under the following heads: learning strategies, teaching techniques, learning environments, curriculum content, attitudes to education, attitudes to media, reading habits, family constraints and other relevant items.

43. A number of aspects of learning strategies were clarified by the survey. Quite clearly, the adult population preferred to work towards clear-cut goals. A small proportion undertook learning for something to do or for its own sake. A slight preference was demonstrated for working in a group rather than alone. Although groups were preferred there was a fairly strong dislike of competition. In the past, the majority of learning had been embarked upon because it was needed for employment purposes. Quite a large number undertook learning for pleasure in a wide variety of subjects. Most of those involved preferred

to select their own learnings goals. There was a strongly expressed dislike of educational and career counselling. This result contrasts with the findings of most other research in the field, including our initial and secondary surveys. However, some workers[2,3,4] have reported particular groups displaying similar attitudes and these findings were supported by our experience of providing a counselling service which is reported later.

44. Without any doubt the members of the sample group learnt most in an incidental way from their general experience of life. Most formal learning occurred in a non-traditional manner, and was more inclined to happen through experimental situations. One-to-one and collaborative teaching methods were preferred to the more common didactic style. Indeed a fairly strong dislike of lectures was expressed. Self-instructional methods were either liked very much or detested.

45. A strong preference was expressed for courses to be run in Working Men's Clubs - this is in direct contrast with the findings in our previous surveys. A good social atmosphere was felt to be very important. There was also a strong response in favour of learning with their own peer group. A substantial number was in favour of learning at home. Opinion was fairly evenly divided about the desirability or otherwise of running courses in local colleges. Again this latter situation contrasts with the clearly expressed preference of the questionnaire surveys.

46. Without doubt most respondents wanted to learn a range of subjects which may be labelled 'creative'. Sports were the next most popular curricular area. Home improvement and do-it-yourself courses and courses related to particular jobs were the next most in demand. There was also a strong requirement for courses in languages and social development and caring, although the latter was less emphatic than with the

initial and secondary surveys. Computing courses were favoured and disliked by fairly equal numbers.

47. The most commonly expressed view about education was that courses must be vocationally relevant. Quite a substantial proportion of the sample thought educational courses were a 'waste of time'. There was a strongly expressed opinion that courses should not be like 'going back to school'. Formal accreditation of courses was thought to be very motivating.

48. An overwhelming majority of the sample enjoyed television as a medium of entertainment. A substantial number considered television a suitable medium for documentaries and many thought it was a good medium for instructional purposes. Film was clearly seen as a medium of entertainment. Very few views were expressed on the benefits and problems of radio as a medium, for either entertainment or educational purposes.

49. The majority of the sample population read, mostly fiction, but about half of them also read factual books and some read technical books. A substantial number read newspapers. Some use was made of the local libraries. About 10% reported reading difficulties.

50. A variety of family constraints to taking educational/ training courses were reported. The most frequently quoted problems were household responsibilities, young children and marital problems. Strong parental influences and health problems were also cited, along with other dependants. Financial problems were also of some concern, but less so than to those taking part in previous surveys.

51. A range of other interesting points were mentioned in the transcripts. Money featured high on this list, and nearly half the sample had financial problems. Many of the group were bitter towards various parties for causing their unemployment, most frequently towards the

Government. Just under a quarter of the sample saw their employment problems as age-related. About 14% of the group considered their previous employment boring.

IV. 'SPECIAL COURSE' DEVELOPMENTS

THE ELECTRONICS COURSE

Context and needs

52. The surveys showed that apart from car manufacturing - the industry from which most unemployed adults came - the new technologies and 'social services' were the two areas of training most in demand. It was decided to concentrate on new technologies here for the following reasons:

(i) specific demands by the target population;
(ii) the expressed wish of the target population to study things likely to help them get employment;
(iii) industry perceived the need for an updating or introduction of skills in new areas - mainly in the new technologies;
(iv) job opportunities in the new technologies were more available to minority groups as there are fewer cultural and language barriers than in the social services;
(v) job opportunities were available to both sexes.

53. Electronics was selected as the first course to be provided because it was in the area of new technology most in demand by both the target population and the employment market and because it underpins most of the new technologies.

Design and delivery

Course development

54. Initially, a course team was created consisting of a project supervisor, the author and an 'expert' in electronics from the college staff. The aims for the course were defined and a variety of available courses

and course materials were examined for suitability. As none of these met the criteria set, it was decided to design a course of our own. The author carried out various analyses and created a course structure and materials. These were commented on and amended at various stages.

55. Aims

The aims of the electronics course were:

(i) to provide a foundation of knowledge and practical skills in electronics;
(ii) to reorientate the views of the target population towards electronics as a potential area of employment;
(iii) to motivate the group to career training in electronics.

Delivering the course

56. It was intended that the course be as open as possible. With this in mind it was designed with few prerequisites and in a format which allowed flexibility of presentation. The course also tried to take into account the learning characteristics and preferences of unemployed adults. The resulting 'package' consisted of the following items:

- a course text
- a kit of tools and electronic components
- a test booklet
- a marking guide
- an 'employment in electronics' booklet

The text consisted of a number of sections. Apart from an introduction, there was a short section on safety and a longer one on soldering. There were then nine sections based on practical projects. Each of these

graded projects was introduced with instructions for its completion. Essential theory and vocabulary were introduced to support the practical work. In addition, some optional theory was provided. Each section contained a number of self-assessment questions. The text was completed by answers to these questions and indexes.

The test booklet provided an overall measure of learning. It was presented in two parts, based on the essential and the optional theory. The marking guide followed the same pattern.

The kit consisted of a carrying case and all the tools and electronic components required for building the circuits forming the basis of the nine projects.

The employment booklet contained a range of typical job advertisements, and exploration of the electronics industry, comments on employment prospects, comments on training opportunities and the reprint of an article on the electronics industry. It was intended that this booklet should accompany a tutorial/seminar on employment prospects in the industry to be held at the end of the course.

The course 'package' was designed for home study or self-instructional use. In the former mode, regular tutorials were arranged whilst in the latter they were only available on demand.

Reviewing the course

57. It was decided to carry out trials to assess the effectiveness and the acceptability of the course and its materials.

The test population was chosen from a part of the original survey sample who had demonstrated an interest in training by attending the experimental 'New Skills' Course. All members of the course were invited to take

part in the trials as it was expected that the response rate would be about the same as, or slightly less than, that of those who had expressed an interest in electronics in our original survey, i.e. 10-20%. In the event we had a response rate of some 60+%. Because of our limited resources we could not cope with so many people and interviews were held with a view to selecting participants for two groups. Group one consisted of those selected to take part in a trial during which they would work as a group. Group two consisted of those who would test the material in a home study mode.

The group-based trial was carried out in a flat at the YWCA in Coventry city centre. Each individual worked through the course and a group seminar was held at the end.

The home study trial was carried out in conditions as near to those prevailing operationally as possible. A group seminar was held on completion of the course.

In both trials the participants were asked to keep records of their work during the trial and to hand these and their test paper to the tutor. Additionally, the participants were asked to complete a questionnaire.

A group debriefing session was held, to supplement the participants' comments.

Final evaluation

58. Evaluation of the 'Introduction to Electronics' course gave rise to both statistical and anecdotal results. Judged on the basis of satisfactorily completed working circuits built, the electronics course was very successful as a self-instructional approach to learning. Some caution is, however, necessary when considering its success with circuitry working from a mains supply as only half those in the trials got their circuits to work. However, examination of the comparatively complex

circuits showed that the faults were usually fairly minor.

59. Without doubt the quality of presentation and the degree of competence shown in soldering and related skills was very high and would have graced the performance of any 'professional'. None of the students reported any difficulty with these delicate skills. Success on the knowledge-based part of the course was somewhat less marked, as had been expected. It had been a very long time since most of those taking part in the trials had undertaken any formal academic learning. In addition, the level of knowledge pursued in the text was quite high, especially in the optional sections. The gain scores of just under 50% are quite respectable when viewed in this context.

The average working time for the course of just over 70 hours indicates that the course is roughly equivalent to a term's course of 5-6 hours a week. A surprisingly high proportion of those who took part in the pilot study attempted the optional theory - just over a third of all students.

60. All those who helped with the trials found the course useful, interesting and enjoyable.

The majority of the students thought that there was too much optional theory and that all the theory was too difficult. In view of the comments above, one needs to treat this finding with some caution. However, changes in the text generated by the course designer's own observations should alleviate the situation to a large extent. Some of the more important of these observations are highlighted here:

(i) The tool and component kits are expensive to produce - somewhere in the order of £75. The bulk of capital outlay is for tools and large components, such as transformers, which are reusable. However, many of the small electronic

components are consumable and, whilst they may be recoverable, the failure rate on recycled components is quite high and such reuse failure causes learning problems. None of this would matter on a 'full-cost course' but on an unsponsored course for the unemployed it means a source of finance to pay the running costs has to be found.

(ii) Regular contact with a tutor is desirable and for some parts of the course essential. Hence a completely isolated distance learning mode is unsuitable, whereas a home study mode, with its inbuilt tutorial support, is preferable.

(iii) There were some problems in obtaining small quantities of particular electronic components which led to lags between the identification of need and supply. At least three months should be allowed to ensure that such lags do not occur.

(iv) Reactions in some components were very difficult to see. This problem necessitated the redesign of some circuits.

(v) Because some of the manipulation required was very fine and involved, it was necessary to provide an extension to the individual's manual control and an electronic engineer's 'third hand' was added to the tool kit.

(vi) Circuit-boards presented some problems. They proved to be rather restricting and sometimes misleading, partly due to their layout and partly due to the differences in scale between the very small electronic components and the much larger 'interface' components. The stripboard is scaled to electronic components such as integrated circuits and is

rather small compared with interface equipment such as toggle-switches.

A detailed description of the 'Introduction to Electronics' course is available from the college.

THE PROGRAMME FOR SELF-DEVELOPMENT PILOT COURSE

61. Among the surveyed group were a number of long-term unemployed who may have experienced particular personal problems such as loss of confidence and a developing feeling of bitterness. Educational attainment in the past was low to average though ability levels were normally distributed. For this group active collaboration of the students in setting targets and defining needs was appropriate. A programme for self-development was devised for this group.

62. Aims

The aims of this programme were:

(i) to introduce and provide the opportunity to practise the use of techniques of self-analysis;

(ii) to provide guidance in the setting of realistic life-goals;

(iii) to increase the individual's capacity and willingness to take control over, and be responsible for, events;

(iv) to provide an opportunity for individuals to exercise their creative abilities;

(v) to improve the individual's capacity to deal with other people.

Entry requirements

63. There were no special requirements for this course except the ability to read and write English and to discuss matters in English with peers.

Curriculum content

64. The curriculum was divided into four major areas: introduction, self-assessment, self-development and a section on alternative futures. There was overlap between the self-assessment and the self-development sections and also between these and the alternative futures section. Progress between each section was essentially linear but relationships within sections were complex enough to give a thorough mix of ways of progressing through the section.

Duration

65. The course lasted for fifty hours spread over ten weeks.

Objectives

66. During the course the students had the opportunity to:

(i) define and explain self-assessment, self-development and alternative futures;

(ii) describe characteristics of personal success, e.g. command of basic facts and relevant knowledge, skills in analysis, problem solving, social skills, emotional resilience, knowledge of self;

(iii) use the items in (ii) to diagnose personal strengths and weaknesses, and set a series of personal goals based on these. Plan for continuing assessment of self;

(iv) understand their own learning processes in terms of factors which assist or hinder learning. Demonstrate range of learning skills;

(v) analyse self and others in terms of important dimensions such as:

- aggressive - weak
- clever - stupid
- funny - serious etc.

(vi) state the factors to be taken into account when planning change in terms of:

- individual and group motivation
- organisational policies and procedures
- external influences
- problem definition
- identity of participants
- nature of change
- desired method(s) of change

(vii) analyse behaviour in small groups into the categories:

- proposing
- giving information
- seeking information
- supporting
- disagreeing
- defending/attacking
- blocking/raising difficulties
- testing understanding
- summarising

(viii) practise various aids to creative problem solving such as:

- brainstorming
- network diagrams
- matrix games
- clarification

(ix) produce an analysis of themselves in relation to their:

- career
- personal relationships
- material affluence
- development
- learning

(x) analyse their life goals in terms of:

- career
- personal relationships
- material possessions
- personal development

(xi) demonstrate methods of working which include:

- personal integrity
- individual work
- partnership
- support groups
- choice of location
- phasing of learning
- using the 'what? so what? now what?' model of learning

(xii) select contacts with other people on the following bases:

- family/organisational/clients
- address books/telephone directories
- new neighbours at home/work

and

establish contacts with other people via:

- names
- titles
- nature of activity
- goals
- potential help
- goal conflicts (potential/actual)

(xiii) recognise that emotion is indicated by:

speech and body language

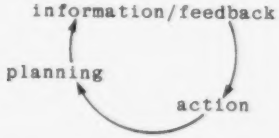
and explain that failure to handle emotions satisfactorily can lead to stress - generated 'fight or flight' behaviour which feeds back to cause further stress. Describe common strategies for handling emotional stress such as drug taking (tranquilisation), meditation, relaxation techniques;

(xiv) describe the effects of conflict in terms of frustration

and describe conflict mediation strategies in terms of:

- competition
- collaboration
- avoidance
- accommodation
- compromise

(xv) explain that decision making is a cyclic process consisting of the steps:



(xvi) list and define the following decision-making techniques, where appropriate:

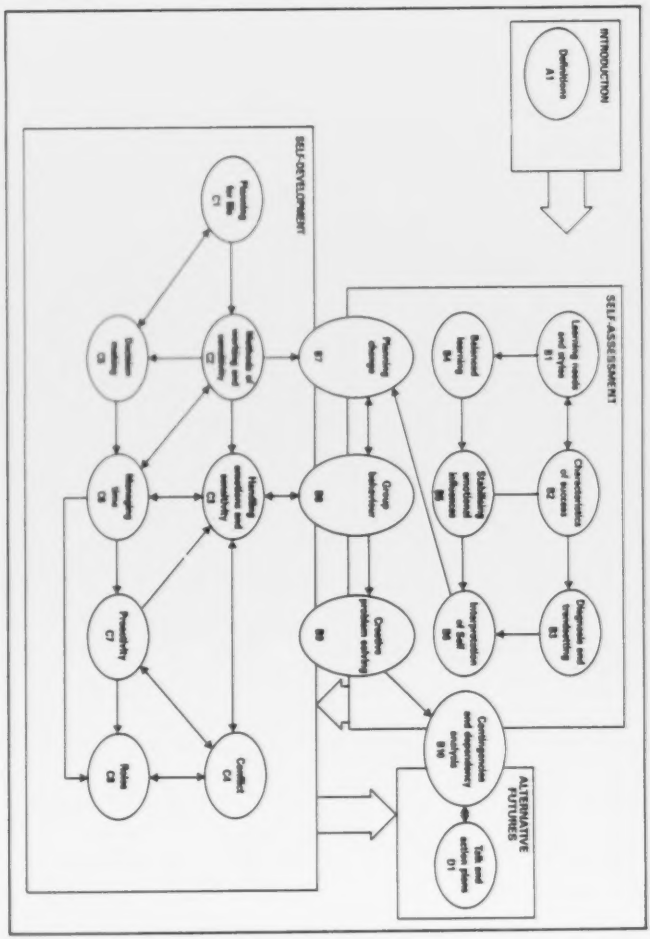
- network planning
- value analysis
- linear programming
- break-even analysis
- cost-effective analysis
- cost-benefit analysis

(xvii) allocate available time by producing a timetable, allocating time on a 'must', 'should' and 'would like' basis in terms of tasks and priorities.

67. **Delivery of course**

The course consisted of sessions on each of the areas shown in the curriculum structure model (figure 6). These were grouped as in the model and taken in the sequence shown. Each session consisted of a staff input and student activity. Activities included structured exercises, discussion, role-play exercises, tests, questionnaires, socio-drama and games.

FIGURE 6 CURRICULUM STRUCTURE



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Final review of self-development course

68. The Programme in Self-Development was evaluated using a variety of methods which gave rise to both statistical and anecdotal results. On the basis of the students' view of how well the aims of the course were achieved, the exercise was a success.

69. The use of the flat located in the YWCA building in the centre of Coventry was very popular, its location and ease of access especially so as they saved students' travelling costs - a very important consideration. Because the flat was away from the college site and had no other students, the atmosphere generated was very relaxed - a point which was of importance to over 80% of the students and which was also commented on by the staff. The facilities, such as being able to make coffee whenever they felt like it, were also very much appreciated by both staff and students. Also of considerable value was the fact that the site was supportive of close, personal interaction and free of the normal institutional restrictions.

70. In general, the methods of working that were adopted were approved of. There was total agreement that discussion was the most favoured mode. Surprisingly, the more active methods of projects, games and role plays were the least popular. There was also more demand for staff input than might have been expected. Questionnaires, profiles and other written exercises were popular, as were pre-prepared students' notes. In general staff opinion was in line with that of the students, except for the practical work of games and projects which were considered to have made a major contribution. The balance of approaching a topic from a variety of perspectives was focused on by the students as being of positive value.

71. Most of the content was seen as relevant, especially problem solving and decision making. On the basis of

the students' view of relevance it was possible to analyse the course content into a series of priorities. Some interesting dichotomies between staff and student priorities were shown by this analysis. The highest priority topics of the teaching staff were the interpretation of self, planning change, and task and action plans. As far as the students were concerned, the interpretation of self was only a second priority, task and action plans were third order priority and planning change was eighth order priority - at the very bottom of their list. The staff emphasised the importance of personal tutorials, although this did not figure all that highly in the students' values.

72. The majority of students and staff thought that the amount of time allocated to each topic was about right, although there was a significant minority of students who considered it too much. The vast majority of the students thought that the amount of time per day was about right but teaching staff thought it was too much! Most of the students thought that the course was of about the right duration. However, a fairly significant minority agreed with the teaching staff and the course designer that it was not long enough, It is, perhaps, significant that the original plan had been for a ten week course but that this had been cut to six weeks because of the problems of completing the trials within the life-cycle of the research project and the availability of teaching staff. The course organiser and the students considered the distribution of time within the week to be satisfactory whilst the teaching staff did not. About a fifth of the students considered that they spent too little time with each member of staff, slightly more thought it about right, as did all the teaching staff. The remainder of the students had no opinion on this.

73. With the exception of a significant minority who thought the staff were too flexible, the students considered the staff approach to be about right in terms of empathy, commitment, understanding of personal

problems, concern for the students, understanding of the problems of unemployment, control, effort, humour and the degree of achievement.

74. The majority of the students would have attended the course knowing what they did at its end, would attend courses run on a similar basis, enjoyed the course and thought it was worthwhile. The course designer and teaching staff agreed with them.

75. A number of complimentary comments were made by the students. Perhaps the course can be best summed up in the words of one of the members of staff '...did a great deal to boost the confidence of the students' and of one of the students '...I discussed the course with my family and we don't usually talk that much...'

76. The students' weekly diaries indicated considerably more favourable comments than criticisms, both in number and in strength of feeling. Particularly well-liked were the discussions. By far the strongest favourable comments were about the degree of interest generated. Also high on the list of benefits were enjoyment and the development of group awareness. The only adverse criticism that was voiced with any force was that some of the discussion was irrelevant.

The pattern of critical and supportive comments made by the course designer and teaching staff in the observation diary was very much in line with those mentioned above. By far the most advantageous aspect of the course commented on was the lively discussion that took place. The other most significant comments were on the degree of student participation and the amount of relevant activity. As with the students the only important criticism by the staff was on the amount of 'loose' discussion.

77. Analysis of the individual tutorial interviews showed unequivocally that for the vast majority of the students their major goal in life and their most

important career plan was to get a job. Most of the other goals, each held by a significant minority, were concerned with material gain or the development of 'self'. Career plans were mixed, with the strongest preference expressed being voluntary/social work - a finding consistent with the surveys. Apart from 20% who had no plans, the educational/training aspirations of the group were mixed, but at a surprisingly high level, e.g. 'Open Access', teacher training, degree course.

78. The areas in which observations were made were recorded and attention has been focused on some of the more important of these:

(i) Comment has already been made about the acceptability of the YWCA flat. Conditions in the flat would be much improved if it was thoroughly cleaned and decorated and if a range of visual aids, including video, could be permanently available there.

(ii) Greater time for preparation should be made available so that the existing lesson plans and materials can be revised and upgraded.

(iii) A new means of gaining access to the potential students needs to be devised. Direct telephone contact, as used for this course, was expensive. More importantly, however, is the fact that the data base on which it drew is now some three years or more out of date. (Because there is no longer a requirement for the unemployed to register as such in order to obtain benefits, the register is virtually defunct.)

(iv) Teaching staff need to learn to control discussion groups so that, whilst remaining flexible and maintaining a relaxed atmosphere, they keep the discussion moving and relevant. They also need to learn to brief, run and debrief game and role-play sessions more smoothly.

(v) Current advertising of courses fails to reach those potentially most in need of them, including the unemployed. Educational establishments appear to communicate the wrong information using the wrong wording via the wrong media. Current advertising is too concerned with administrative detail and not explicit enough about the nature of courses. Furthermore, too much of the advertising is via the press, where it may be seen but is often ignored. Many other advertising media are underused or not employed at all, e.g. public transport vehicles, local radio, personalised mail shots, 'door-to-door' selling, as well as displays in pubs, clubs and benefit offices, local doctors' surgeries and post offices.

(vi) The students were not immediately concerned with short-term problems of coping with unemployment and the consequential changes in life-style. Nor were they concerned with specifics in the medium term. They were, however, very interested in the longer term generalisable ideas, and skills such as decision making and problem solving. They were not interested in 'employment skills', because they did not know what skills are likely to find them work. Neither were they concerned with 'personal adjustment' - most of them considered that they had long since met these needs for themselves.

(vii) The students and staff were heavily committed to the major concepts of the curriculum philosophy. The degree of openness, especially at a personal level, was encouraging. Among the students a high level of autonomy developed and this was set against the development of extremely close bonds between all members of the group including the staff and the course designer.

(viii) One of the highly valued aspects of the course according to the students was the process of accreditation and the subsequent award of a certificate signed by the principal of the college.

V. OTHER COLLEGE INITIATIVES FOR THE UNEMPLOYED

79. The three years of planning and undertaking the FEU project coincided with several initiatives launched for the adult unemployed by Tile Hill College. The period before this (1979-1980) had seen a rapid decline in a number of the traditional, MSC-supported TOPS courses because of national MSC policy. By 1980/81, MSC support for the adult unemployed at the college had been reduced to one TOPS course in clerk book-keeping (18 weeks) and a pre-training course (18 weeks run twice a year). This led to college management seeking support from the board of governors for new initiatives to provide for the increasingly large numbers of workers being made redundant by firms associated with motor vehicle manufacturing.

Pre-residential workers' course

80. One of the first courses offered was initiated with support from the Coventry Social Services Department in 1980/81*. At that time, the Department was able to identify a need for mature people to work in residential homes where the turnover of staff had been unacceptably high. It was offered originally as an 18 hours per week course (to protect the DHSS benefits of the students) over 13 weeks but all students were placed in a social services establishment as a volunteer for the remaining two days per week. Since then the format of the course has been changed so that students now attend for one day per week for an academic year and are in a social services placement for two days a week.

---

* Further details about this course are available from the Department of Social Care, Tile Hill College, Coventry.

81. The interest in this course has always been high and requests for application forms always exceed 50. Most of the applicants are in the age range 25-35 seeking an alternative career in the caring field. However a small number of students over the age of 45 have come on the course and one student of over 50 years was successful in obtaining a one-year full-time post with social services. On most courses there have been more men than women.

82. There is no external funding for this course which has been resourced from the college budget. Normal tuition fees are charged, but a change in the authority policy in 1981, which now gives 75% remission of fees for the unemployed on general education and vocational courses, has considerably eased financial constraints. Before this, the college set up a Student Hardship Fund with support from local trade unions to help with remission of fees. Textbooks are provided by the college.

83. This initiative is relevant to the project since the social care field was identified by the unemployed as a potential area for retraining and alternative employment. The combination of group teaching and practical placement experience is recognised as an effective way of introducing students to a new field. The need for high priority to be given to personal development, guidance and counselling was reinforced by the college's experience with this client group.

Alternative work preparation course (new skills course)

84. This initiative arose after the commencement of the project following discussions with officers from Coventry LEA on the feedback from the Phase I survey.

The authority was able to secure through MSC (Sheffield) resources for running the above course based at three FE colleges in Coventry.

85. The details of the course can be summarised as follows:

Target group:	25- to 45-year-olds, unemployed for one year or more
Numbers:	Three groups of 13 students
Colleges providing courses:	Coventry Technical College Henley College of Further Education Tile Hill College of Further Education
Course duration:	14 weeks (3 days per week) College attendance of 7 hours per day.
Course structure:	Phase I: Induction (week 1) Phase II: 'Taster' Courses. Each group of 13 students spends 4 weeks at each college (weeks 2-13) Phase III: Review and assessment (week 14) Organisation involved open access with additional trainees able to start at the commencement of week 6.

86. The aim of the course was to encourage students:

- to participate in a number of experiences to help identify new areas of employment;

- to provide for progression to other part-time FE courses provided in Coventry;

- to consider opportunities for self-employment;

- to provide guidance, counselling and support to the adult unemployed; to assist them in developing new interests and skills; to allow for assessment and evaluation of the individual student's abilities and

needs; and to encourage personal development and independent learning.

The course first ran in January 1983 and there have been two further intakes. The 'taster' courses were initially:

Catering, Food, Beverages (Henley College of Further Education)
Motor vehicle servicing (Tile Hill College of Further Education)
Building and construction (Coventry Technical College)

In a later course new tasters were introduced:

Home bakery
Floristry and pottery
Photography
Retailing
and further new areas are planned.

87. The feedback from these courses was incorporated into the project* and the MSC is continuing to support this type of work preparation course as a model referred to in Training for Jobs** as providing 'further help for unemployed people who need training at a more basic level to restore their chance of getting a job after long periods of unemployment'.

Business Skills Workshop

88. The Community Education Development Centre (CEDC) is a national agency based in Coventry concerned with the development of initiatives in community education.

---

* A report on this course dated May 1983 is available from the Department of Community Education, Tile Hill College, Coventry.

** Training for Jobs - HMSO, Cmnd 9135, January 1984

Following the initial findings of the project, Mr John Rennie, Director of CEDC, and Dr Eric Avery, the College Principal, met Mr Geoffrey Holland, the Director of MSC, in the summer of 1982 to discuss possible initiatives for the adult unemployed which could be supported by MSC and in particular the issue of certification for the client group. As a consequence of this meeting, the college became involved in two further initiatives outlined below.

89. Using college resources to provide computers and word processors, a Business Skills Workshop was set up in May 1983. A special room was equipped with a networking system of five ICL DRS computers, electric and electronic typewriters, four stand-alone computers, an audio machine and a language laboratory to support those students for whom English was not their native tongue. The MSC, through the special development fund, supported a one-term full-time course for two groups of unemployed adults.

90. The course was designed to provide training in the new technologies in a modern office environment. The course was to be multicultural, student-orientated, technology-based, with a high concentration of communication skills. Guidance and counselling sessions were built in and a weekly report form provided instant feedback. Course problems, individual problems and the job situation were discussed in these sessions. The students were exposed to a wide variety of experiences and they developed in confidence, flexibility and dexterity. All students prepared a c.v. and letters of applications ready for despatch; role playing and games were also part of the course. Out of the initial twenty-one students, ten are known to have jobs.

91. The second course was modified slightly to introduce two modules for students who were interested in self-employment. An 'introduction to marketing' module

consisting of selling skills, display skills and marketing techniques together with introduction to business was offered against world of business and office procedures for the other group. There were twenty-four students on this course, all female, six of whom were Asian. Sixteen of these are known to have jobs. One particularly pleasing instance was a student who had never worked, had been a 'problem' at school but had got five 'O' levels after leaving. At an initial interview she seemed utterly defeated, not knowing which direction to take and tired of failing to get a job. She now has a full-time job in the Civil Service.

Community Programme training

92. Another joint initiative with CEDC involved the agreement with the MSC to support a number of Community Programme places in which the off-the-job training for the adult trainees was an essential part. This pilot scheme, run in Clwyd and Coventry, involved all the trainees being paid at the appropriate rate for the job for three days per week (all the posts were therefore part-time posts), and agreeing voluntarily to attend for one day per week (unpaid) for off-the-job training.

93. The training package offered consisted of a 'core curriculum' which emphasised interpersonal and communication skills essential in most Community Programme employment. During the first term all trainees undertook this programme and from September 1984 chose to 'infill' on an appropriate college FE course which was most compatible with the specific on-the-job tasks undertaken within the Community Programme. The teaching costs were resourced from the £10 per trainee per week provided for within the MSC resources, although this meant that the maximum part-time wage could not exceed £50.00 per week.

94. The venue for the initial training was also the YWCA

flat used for the pilot stages of the FEU project and this again proved the value of having an off-site resource in the early stages of the initial training programme. However, after a few months, the trainees showed no reluctance in attending the main college and were very keen to attend courses which led to certification.

95. Training for Jobs has indicated that the MSC has made a 'specific proposal to incorporate more training or work preparation into the Community Programme when the results of the Commission's survey of that Programme become available'. In October 1984, it was announced that the Secretary of State for Employment had accepted the MSC's proposals to link basic training and work preparation with Community Programme projects. As in the pilot scheme above, participation will be voluntary and will be for those employed part-time on these schemes. It is expected that the numbers involved will increase to 50,000 by 1986/87.

Open Access course

96. This course commenced as a pilot scheme for 12 students in 1981/82. From the start it had the full support of the University of Warwick and Coventry (Lanchester) Polytechnic. It provided an alternative route to higher education for mature students and involved a one-year course of study at the college.

97. At first it was envisaged that this provision would be on a full-time basis and applicants would be eligible for a discretionary award and remission of fees if they satisfied the normal local authority criteria. However, it soon became apparent that, should this course be offered over 18 hours per week, it would become attractive to the adult unemployed. In the first year, all students had to pay full tuition fees, but, with the change in authority policy granting 75% remission to the unemployed, from 1982/83, the majority of students on this course have been unemployed adults.

98. All applicants are personally interviewed and motivation and academic ability are important criteria for selection. Nevertheless, it is college policy to offer places to a wide range of candidates from different backgrounds, rather than limit places to those who are reasonably certain of passing the course. The whole philosophy of the course is that the students have a pre-run of a first-year higher education course in terms of study, assignments, essays, seminars and other relevant study skills, including tuition from visiting lecturers from both participating higher education institutions. Drop-out is therefore planned for on the grounds that if pressures (academic, social, financial) are great, it is better that they are exposed on the course rather than at university or polytechnic.

99. The general Open Access course provides for the study of social science subjects and the humanities. To meet these requirements, the course includes: communications, study skills, literary appreciation, social history, psychology, sociology, social administration and mathematics at a level to prepare students to interpret the data and statistics required in these subjects at degree level. Students who make successful applications to higher education institutions are normally offered places conditional on the successful completion of the course. The usual requirements are four credits and three passes for degree courses that require other applicants to have passed three 'A' levels, gaining B grades in each. On the first intake of twelve students, eight proceeded to higher education (seven locally and one to Oxford Polytechnic) and all are progressing well in their second year as undergraduates. From last year's group, nine went on to higher education. Among the most interesting cases was the first student to be accepted on the course at the age of 65. He should graduate before his 70th birthday. Another was the lady who gained a place on a law degree course at Warwick in the face of competition from nearly 2,000 applicants for 60 places. A 40-year-old student had worked on the factory floor until he was made redundant and, despite a

a lack of any formal qualifications, gained a credit in every subject. A widow who gained so much confidence from the course that she decided to embark on a career as an artist now holds many exhibitions and makes a living from her work.

100. To summarise, this course has proved to be popular and a real success in terms of opening up opportunities for higher education to those who for various reasons have missed out, but who have the potential to succeed. It is viewed very positively by the university and the polytechnic and recent approaches suggest it has now become recognised by other universities and polytechnics.

FEU as a catalyst

101. It is apparent that one of the major effects of obtaining FEU funding for this project was to focus a wide section of the college on the needs of the adult unemployed. It is interesting that, during the lifetime of the project, each of the five departments in the college became involved in at least one initiative for the adult unemployed. While the FEU project funded in the main the cost of one member of staff and course materials, each year an increasing level of resources was devoted to the running of courses for unemployed adults either by external MSC funding (some locally but some from Sheffield), or by a greater priority being given to this area of work in respect of the college budget. Also, during the course of the project, the college, through its board of governors, was successful in influencing the local authority to introduce for the first time 75% remission of fees for all adult unemployed students on general education and vocational courses.

102. It is therefore suggested that, in this particular FEU project, the 'spin-offs' of the research can be summarised as follows:

(i) It identified educational and training needs which were not being met.

(ii) It focused the attention of a wide cross-section of the college on these needs and acted as a catalyst to increase interest in unemployed adults.

(iii) It produced a response in terms of new course proposals and curriculum innovation in each of the five college departments.

(iv) It assisted the college management in obtaining the support of the board of governors to give a higher priority in resource terms to this area of the college's work.

(v) It influenced the local authority to change its policy on the remission of fees to the benefit of the adult unemployed.

VI. REVIEW AND CONCLUSIONS

103. As a result of the project, the college gained considerable experience of reaching the target group and developing courses to meet the needs of the unemployed. In this section the major factors are reviewed and those issues which would be of most benefit to any other further education establishment wishing to pilot courses and offer initiatives to the adult unemployed are identified. The review is set out under the following headings:

1. Identification of needs
2. Outreach and recruitment
3. Adapting college structures
4. Changing policy
5. Development of curricula

Identification of needs

104. The first task was to seek to identify educational/ training needs of the unemployed. Despite the fact that considerable time and resources were devoted to this, at best the project was successful only in identifying the individuals' perception of such needs rather than determining a balanced view of them. It was found that many representative bodies such as the local trades council, chamber of commerce, various departments of the local authority and the professional institutions were also unable to give clear indications of their educational/training needs.

105. Traditionally, colleges seek to bring together representatives of these bodies through their advisory committees, yet it is probably exceptional to find these committees giving clear guidance to colleges on future developments which would meet the educational and training needs of the adult unemployed. More

recently, in Training for Jobs* there is some indication that the Government wishes the MSC to play an important role in this. The MSC's proposal is to to provide 'an industry-focused programme for both employed and unemployed people which would give them job-related training directed towards known employment needs in industry and commerce...'

106. The experience of this research indicates the following:

(i) It is difficult to devise a questionnaire which will identify the specific educational and training needs of the unemployed as these are so varied and individualistic.

(ii) The 'face to face' interview results provide much more background information about the unemployed, but, since this information is so diverse and lengthy, it may not be of much practical assistance in devising appropriate courses.

(iii) Most of the valuable information on educational and training needs was obtained from discussions on a 'one-to-one' basis and in groups when this was built into the structure of the pilot courses. Similarly, in most of the other courses initiated by the college and described in the previous chapter, this proved to be an important feature of the assessment process.

107. The conclusion reached is that further education colleges are unlikely to be able to offer the types of course programmes which appeal to the unemployed until they have run pilot courses during which the views of the unemployed have been sought at all stages of the training process.

---

* Training for Jobs, HMSO, Cmnd 9135, para 40 (a)

The design of future courses should be amended to take account of this feedback. The concept of the 'negotiated contract' would appear to be just as relevant to courses for the adult unemployed as for school-leavers or YTS trainees.

Outreach and recruitment

108. It has become clear to most further education colleges and other agencies interested in making course provision for the adult unemployed that recruitment presents a marketing challenge totally different from that experienced previously. Unlike the recruitment of school-leavers, the client group is not in the education system already, is not normally in receipt of advice from careers staff or teachers and, in many cases, has no wish to return to the educational world. Indeed, the adult unemployed are not convinced that a further education college has anything to offer them and, in many cases, there is a fear about exposing themselves to a system which in the past has not served them well.

As a consequence, any institution wishing to build a programme of courses for the adult unemployed must devote considerable time, effort and resources to reaching their clients. This project showed that, while there is no universal formula which guarantees success, the following will certainly be important.

109. Unemployed adults have expressed a range of preferences and dislikes concerning the sites on which training/ educational courses should be delivered. Experience using the YWCA flat in the centre of Coventry suggests that a satisfactory compromise is possible.

The special features of this location were:

- it was in the city centre;
- it was easily accessible on foot or by public transport;

- it was physically removed from the main college campus
- all students attending were unemployed or retired or work-free;
- it was not subject to normal college rules (timetables etc.);
- it had simple self-catering facilities;
- it was informally furnished but had an adequate classroom facility.

There is no doubt that this type of environment was attractive to the type of unemployed adult who was resistant to, and possibly fearful of, attending college. Because most of the adult unemployed have been away from formal training/education for some years, indeed for many years in a lot of cases, they are apprehensive about 'going back to school'. The location provided good opportunity for social interaction and the informality of the setting enabled them to respond more quickly and positively in group discussions.

However, experience with another course who used this location showed that, after a term, students were willing and keen to attend college and join more traditional courses. Hence, in planning courses for unemployed adults, the advantages of an informal, off-site facility in overcoming initial resistance to attending a large educational institution should be taken into account.

110. A major problem occurs where publicity for courses for the adult unemployed is concerned. Most of the publicity given to college courses is via the local press. Many of those in the target group do not read newspapers, or, if they do, these are national dailies. Even those who do read local papers find that the advertisements fail to attract their attention, or, more often, fail to give the information that they, the potential students, want, e.g. details of course aims and content. Many other media are available and used

successfully by other organisatons, e.g. beer-mats, local radio, personalised mailshots, talks to clubs, door-to-door visits, public transport vehicles, posters in local doctors' surgeries, benefit offices, post offices, shops, pubs and clubs.

It was the experience of the college that feature articles in local newspapers were more effective at reaching the unemployed than formal advertisements. Direct publicity in the form of posters or leaflets was more productive when placed in locations which the unemployed visited on a regular basis (e.g. Job Library, Jobcentre). The most effective form of recruitment for this particular project was by direct telephone invitation or personal visit to those who responded to the questionnaire.

111. Because employees can lose their job at any time of the year and because adults who are unemployed take a variable amount of time to assess their position and decide that they want a training/educational course, access to courses commencing at a fixed point, particularly at the beginning of the academic year, is limited. It is clear that the majority of courses for unemployed adults should be organised on a 'roll-on, roll-off' basis and that flexible arrangements for enrolment, course administration, payment of fees, etc. should be established. However, it needs to be recognised that from an educational point of view this can lead to difficulties, since members of the group find themselves at different stages. In practice, the 'roll-on, roll-off' approach is achievable when a modular structure is adopted on a 'blocking' basis, allowing different parts of the course to be covered at any stage.

112. Financial constraints have been identified in this research as a problem for the adult unemployed. The costs of course fees, examination fees, text books and materials and, in particular, travelling expenses, are

significant deterrents when it comes to taking educational or training courses. Since college-devised courses for the unemployed which are not funded externally are unlikely to generate income, it must be recognised by the local authority that such courses are 'uneconomic'. If colleges seek to pass on the costs to the clients, it is unlikely that the unemployed will be sufficiently motivated to enrol in numbers which are considered viable by most colleges. Recent changes in MSC policy, which have reduced many of the traditional TOPS courses to below 21 hours per week and dropped subsistence allowances, have already led to a fall in demand.

Adapting college structures

113. Tile Hill College has an academic structure based on traditional departments. At the time this project commenced it had four departments and the project team were based in the Department of Social and Community Services. This department had grown from a Group II to a Group V in the 1970s and, following the availability of new accommodation in 1981, further growth took place. It was, therefore, likely that this department would be reorganised at some stage.

Following internal discussions, the board of governors took the decision in 1983 to create a new Department of Community Education which was given the mandate to serve the needs of the disadvantaged groups in the community.

114. It should be stressed that the college had rejected the idea of a 'YOPS' or 'YTS' Department on the grounds that the resources and staff expertise in all the vocational areas should be available to these trainees. Therefore, when the Department of Community Education was established, the courses for the handicapped and the unemployed, while based in that department, were serviced by all sections of the college. The ethos of the department was such that staff transferred to, and

subsequently appointed to, Community Education were expected to show commitment to disadvantaged groups and to develop a student-centred approach to learning which became central to the ethos of teaching. At the same time, the new department was clearly not the 'dumping ground' for low level courses, since the prestigious Open Access course, the co-ordination of 'O' and 'A' level provision, the home study scheme, teacher training courses in adult education, together with administration of a very large adult education leisure course programme were all based there.

115. It was, therefore, seen as natural that the FEU project be made the responsibility of the new department. This meant that the new head of department took over responsibility for the directorship of the project, though his deputy, who had steered the project through Phase 1, gave guidance to the project director.

The establishment of the new department gave the project a base from which the pilot courses and subsequently a number of other initiatives could be developed as part of the course programme of the college.

Changing policy

116. If a college is to make a significant contribution to meeting the educational and training needs of the unemployed in its local community, this area of work needs to be given some degree of priority by college management, the academic board and the board of governors. Should the college rely entirely on external funding from such bodies as the MSC and/or EEC to resource these programmes, support will be uncertain from year to year, and it will be difficult to maintain continuity. Many of the agencies will only provide part-funding or possibly only cover staffing costs and not provide resources for capital purchases. It may therefore be necessary for college management to commit

resources from the existing budget and this will probably mean adjusting priorities and diverting resources from other areas.

117. This project was carried out at a time when Coventry LEA produced a policy discussion document entitled Comprehensive Education for Life. One of the recommendations in that paper was that further education colleges in Coventry should gradually concentrate on providing post-18 adult education, training and retraining programmes to enable individuals during their working lifetime to update or change their skills by specific programmes on a full-time or part-time basis. Against that background, the college received every encouragement to switch resources from courses for under-18s, which were perhaps being duplicated in schools and for which demand was likely to decrease as school rolls fall, to courses for adults and, in particular, courses for the adult unemployed. This move by the authority and college management to give a higher priority to courses for the adult unemployed enabled staff to appreciate that curriculum development work and new courses in this area would be recognised and, as appropriate, rewarded.

118. At an early stage in the project, the Principal presented a paper to the board of governors requesting some remission of tuition fees for the adult unemployed. The board supported this request and referred the issue to the Education Committee. The committee took the decision in 1982 to offer 75% remission of tuition fees for all adult unemployed on vocational and general education courses (but not non-vocational or leisure courses) in its FE colleges. Unfortunately no financial provision was made for the loss of tuition income from the college budgets as a consequence of this policy and this meant that increased income from other financially self-supporting courses had to compensate for the shortfall. At Tile Hill College, over 350 adults received the benefit of

this remission of fees in the 1983/84 academic year.

119. By 1984/85 a number of adult unemployed enrolled on examination courses and, in certain cases, the cost of the examination fee presented a major difficulty. On one particular full-time course of 18 - 20 weeks, a number wished to take the City and Guilds 746 examination in Basic Computer Programming for which the cost was £38. Again the issue was referred via the board of governors to the Education Committee and it was agreed that from 1985/86 a 75% remission in examination fees to match that for tuition fees should be offered to the unemployed.

120. The conclusions reached from these issues seem to be:

- it is possible on the basis of real need for a further education college to influence its local authority and bring about a change in policy in respect of tuition fees and examination fees for the adult unemployed;

- the likelihood of success in changing authority policy will be increased if that authority is already committed to supporting and improving provision for the adult unemployed;

- in a time of restricted resources and pressures such as 'ratecapping', the cost of any concessions to the unemployed may have to be found from the college budget.

121. Most colleges have finite resources which are available for their course programmes. If colleges are to respond to the educational/training needs of adults, either additional external funding from such agencies as the MSC or the EEC must be secured or existing college resources must be diverted from other areas.

For instance, most colleges offer a wide range of full-time courses to 16- to 18-year-olds which are non-income earning and, therefore, in resource terms, are given high priority; it may be necessary for colleges to review the range of their course provision and examine whether the needs of the adult unemployed should have an equal or greater claim on resources than courses for school-leavers which are often on offer in a number of educational establishments in the vicinity. A further step is for the authority to review its policies and give as equal priority in terms of subsidies to tuition fees, examination fees and travel costs to the adult unemployed as to the 16- to 18-year-olds.

Development of curricula

122. This project sought to develop curricula and curriculum materials, teaching techniques and learning environments most likely to induce successful learning with the target group.

If the college's experience with the pilot courses and other initiatives undertaken during the period of the research is taken into account, the following features become apparent:

(i) Any curricula for the adult unemployed need to have clear-cut aims and explicit objectives which are the subject of negotiation between the students and the staff.

(ii) Since for many this is their first educational experience for some time, there is merit in the students being encouraged to keep a regular diary as a source of formative and supportive feedback.

(iii) Courses for the unemployed should give the opportunity for adults to be creative. This means that the curricula should contain a

significant amount of practical activity and the teaching methods should include informal techniques which exploit the experience of the target group.

(iv) Courses should be client-centred and probably in no other area is there a greater need to deliver courses where students want them, when they want them and presented in the way they want them.

123. The conclusions reached are that the underlying philosophy of any curricula for the adult unemployed should be based on the following concepts:

(a) The major implication of the concept of openness is that, in provision for adult unemployed, accessibility is vital. Courses must be made available where students want them, at times convenient to them, for periods that suit them, in conditions that suit them and at a cost they can afford. It is essential that courses become student-centred and not teacher-, subject-, or perhaps most rigid of all, institution-centred.

(b) Need has a number of implications but perhaps the most important point is to remember that what the student perceives as need will be paramount. The importance of occupational and industrial needs should not be forgotten but providing training in an area which is not taken up is a pointless exercise. Counselling can, of course, be used to mediate student views to some extent.

(c) Clarity of purpose is essential, even if its achievement cannot be measured directly. The purpose should be made explicit and available to the students.

(d) The concept of autonomy is central to any work with adults. (The vast majority have long since achieved autonomy on the domestic front and do not welcome intervention in this area, however well-meaning

it is.) A major concern of all education/training for unemployed adults should be to facilitate autonomy in learning.

(e) Availability has a number of implications. First of all there must be an adaptable source of provision. One of the most vital, badly neglected and inefficient areas is the transmission of information about provision. Access to courses is important and a number of barriers need removing, for example, the requirement of formal entry qualifications, the level of cost and means of paying. Suitable staff, who have the necessary credibility, understanding and empathy, need to be made available.

(f) Vitality is central to courses for adults, and is crucial when dealing with the unemployed if their level of motivation is to be boosted and then maintained.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

References

1. HEALEY, M and CLARK, D
   Industrial Change in Coventry 1974-82
   Economic Monitor, December 1983

2. CHARNLEY, A et al
   Adult Education and Unemployment
   National Institute of Adult Education, 1982

3. MUNDEY, J and MUNDEY, S
   What the Unemployed Want?
   Adult Education, 1982 (A survey carried out in Londonderry)

4. OSBORN, M et al
   Educational Information, Advice, Guidance and Counselling for Adults
   National Institute for Adult Education, 1981

Further reading

1. DAVIES, I K
   The Management of Learning
   McGraw Hill, 1971

2. EDNEY, P J
   A Systems Analysis of Training
   Pitman, 1972

3. HAMBLIN, A C
   Evaluation and Control of Training
   McGraw Hill, 1974

4. HOOPER, R
   The Curriculum: Context, Design and Development
   Oliver & Boyd, 1972

5. MAGER, R F
Developing Attitude Towards Learning
Fearon, Pitman Publishers 1968

6. PERCIVAL, F and ELLINGTON, H
Distance Learning and Evaluation
Kogan Page, 1981

7. RACKHAM, N et al
Developing Interactive Skills
Wellens, 1971

8. ROWNTREE, D
Education Technology in Curriculum Development
Harper and Row, 1974

9. SHIPMAN, M and RAYNOR, J
Perspectives on the Curriculum
Open University Press, 1974

10. TONES, B.K.

Effectiveness and Efficiency in Health Education
Scottish Health Education Unit, 1977

APPENDIX A: THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Tile Hill College of Further Education

Please put tick(s) in the box beside your answer.

About yourself...

1. Are you *Male* ☐ *Female* ☐

2. Are you *Single* ☐
Married ☐
Divorced/separated ☐
Widow/widower ☐

3. What was the last school you attended?
Elementary/All age school ☐
Secondary modern ☐
State grammar/Central/Technical ☐
Comprehensive ☐
Direct grant/Public/Private ☐
Special school - please give name and county ☐
_____
_____
Not in U.K. - please say which country ☐
_____

4. How old were you when you left school?
15 and under ☐
16 ☐
17 ☐
18 or over ☐

5. How old are you now?
Under 20 ☐ *45 - 54* ☐
20 - 24 ☐ *55 - 64* ☐
25 - 34 ☐ *65 or over* ☐
35 - 44 ☐

6. Did you have any examinations/certificates when you left school?
None ☐
RSA/City and Guilds/School Leaving Certificate ☐
CSE ☐
GCE 'O' levels ☐
GCE 'A' levels ☐
SCE 'O' grade ☐
SCE Highers ☐
Others - please say which ☐
_____
_____

7.(a) Was your schooling interrupted in any way?
No ☐
Yes - please say why ☐
_____
_____

(b) If you said "Yes", how much schooling did you miss?
Less than 1 year ☐
Between 1 - 2 years ☐
Between 2 - 3 years ☐

8. Have you attended any courses since leaving school?
Yes ☐
No ☐

9.(a) Did you complete any of your courses?

Yes ☐

No - please say why ☐

_____

_____

(b) If you said "Yes", please give name of your course(s) and say whether each was part-time or full-time and day or evening.

Course _____

Was it Full-time ☐ Part-time ☐

Day ☐ Evening ☐

Course _____

Was it Full-time ☐ Part-time ☐

Day ☐ Evening ☐

Course _____

Was it Full-time ☐ Part-time ☐

Day ☐ Evening ☐

Course _____

Was it Full-time ☐ Part-time ☐

Day ☐ Evening ☐

(c) If you said "Yes", which qualifications did you get?

None ☐

RSA/City and Guilds ☐

CSE ☐

GCE 'O' level ☐

ONC or OND/BEC National/TEC Certificate and Diplomas ☐

GCE 'A' level ☐

HNC or HND/BEC Higher National/TEC Higher Certificate and Diplomas ☐

University Degree (including CNAA degrees) ☐

Armed Forces Education Certificate ☐

Other - Please say which ☐

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

10.(a) Are you taking any training or further education courses at the moment?

Yes ☐

No ☐

(b) If you said "Yes", what courses are you taking and where is the course held?

Name of course _____

_____

Where held _____

_____

(c) What do you like about your course?

_____

_____

(d) Is there anything you don't like about your course?

_____

_____

11. Are you

Self-employed ☐

Working full-time ☐

Working part-time ☐

Unemployed ☐

On a full-time education or skill centre course ☐

Retired ☐

Housewife/Househusband ☐

Other - please state which ☐

_____

IF YOU ARE NOT UNEMPLOYED, PLEASE GO TO QUESTION 17.

12. How long have you been out of work?

Less than 1 year ☐

1 - 2 years ☐

3 - 4 years ☐

More than 4 years ☐

13. What was your last job?

Job _____

Where did you work? _____

_____

Please explain in a few words what you did in your job _____

_____

14. What was your longest full-time job (if different from 13)?

Job _____

Where did you work? _____

_____

Please explain in a few words what you did in your job _____

_____

15.(a) Are you looking for work at the moment?

Yes ☐

No ☐

(b) What sort of work are you looking for?

_____

_____

16. Do you think more education or training will help you to find a job?

Yes ☐

No ☐

17.(a) Would you like to take a general education course?

Yes ☐

No ☐

(b) If you said "Yes", what sort of course would you like?

Basic Education (reading, writing, sums) ☐

Basic English and Maths ☐

'O' level courses ☐

Subjects: _____

_____

'A' level courses ☐

Subjects: _____

_____

Other - please say which ☐

_____

_____

18.(a) Would you like to take a skills training course?

Yes ☐

No ☐

(b) If you said "Yes", what sort of course would you like?
(You can choose more than one)

Typing/shorthand/secretarial ☐

Business Studies - book-keeping, accountancy ☐

Engineering ☐

Electronics/computing ☐

Motor vehicle engineering ☐

Social services/community care ☐

Other - please state which ☐

_____

19.(a) Would you like to take a leisure course?

Yes ☐

No ☐

(b) If you said "Yes", what sort of course would you like?
(You can choose more than one)

Foreign Languages ☐

Cookery ☐

Sport - Badminton/Yoga/ Soccer/Tennis ☐

Photography ☐

Gardening/horticulture ☐

Dressmaking/sewing ☐

Upholstery ☐

Car maintenance/Body work ☐

Art/Pottery ☐

Jewellery/Silvercraft ☐

Keep fit (Men's and Ladies'), Pop music and movement, Weight training ☐

Model engineering ☐

Martial Arts - Ladies' self-defence/karate ☐

(c) Are there any other courses you would like to take?

Yes ☐

No ☐

If "Yes", please state which

_____

_____

20. Where would you prefer to take your course(s)?

- At a School/Community College ☐
- At a College of Further Education ☐
- At a Skills Centre ☐
- At a Community or Social Centre ☐
- At a Working Men's Club or other clubs ☐
- At home by correspondence ☐

21. Would you like some help and advice on choosing a course?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

22.(a) How would a training or education course help you? (You can choose more than one reason)

Would it

- (a) Help me to change jobs ☐
- (b) Help me to get work ☐
- (c) Keep my mind active, give me an interest ☐
- (d) Give me a pastime, sport or hobby ☐
- (e) Give me better qualifications ☐
- (f) Give me the chance to meet people ☐
- (g) Help me be more active in the Community - voluntary work, church work, politics, committees ☐
- (h) Help me to get a place at a University or Polytechnic ☐

22.(b) Which TWO of these eight reasons are most important to you? Choose two from (a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), (h).

Reasons ..... and ..... are most important to me.

23. Is there anything which would make it difficult for you to come to Tile Hill College? Please tick all reasons which affect you.

- Travel and fares ☐
- Course fees ☐
- Time of day (When can you not come: _____) ☐
- Bad Health (What do you suffer from: _____) ☐
- Family responsibilities (please give details: _____ _____) ☐
- Other reasons (please give details: _____) ☐

24. About how many hours per week would you spend altogether on your education or training?

- less than 5 ☐
- between 5 and 10 ☐
- between 10 and 15 ☐
- between 15 and 20 ☐

25. Would you be prepared to discuss these questions further with a College representative?

- Yes ☐
- No ☐

26. Please give:

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Phone No. _____

PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED (NO STAMP NEEDED) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO:

RON HILBORNE,
TILE HILL COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION,
FREEPOST,
COVENTRY. CV4 9BR

We would like to thank you for your time & trouble. Your information will help us to help the unemployed of Coventry.

Eric Avery
Principal

Ron Hilborne
Project Leader

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

APPENDIX B: DETAILS OF INITIAL POSTAL SURVEY

Administration

It was decided to carry out the survey in the first instance by post. The questionnaire given in Appendix A was used. The decision to use a postal survey was taken on a number of bases:

- it is the cheapest form of survey;
- postal surveys yield results more quickly than other methods, especially in the kind of situation in which the project was operating;
- postal surveys give the respondents time to consider their responses, check documents etc.

The questionnaire was accompanied by a letter signed by the College Principal. The purposes of the letter were to:

- establish rapport with the respondents;
- explain the purposes of the survey;
- legitimise the survey (reference was made to the support being provided by Coventry Jobcentre);
- explain the incentive scheme used to stimulate a better response rate. A series of cash prizes were offered via a draw where entries were restricted to those responding to the survey.

The letter and questionnaire were accompanied by a 'freepost' envelope.

Each questionnaire was given a serial number to facilitate identification of non-respondents so that follow-ups could be initiated.

Response

The response rate for the postal survey was 29.1% or approximately a third of those chosen as the sample. The level of response was considered by the Steering Committee to fall within the range of an acceptable rates, although on the low side. Some authorities, however, would consider such a response rate as having a serious risk of bias. The results were somewhat mitigated by the fact that a second interview survey was carried out with the remaining 60% of the sample.

Conclusions

The response could, with hindsight, have been improved by changes in two areas: questionnaire design and survey administration.

Possibly some improvement could have been made to the questionnaire design. One improvement would have been either to delete questions which required opinions based on knowledge that the target population was unlikely to have or alternatively to have given some explanations/definitions before opinions were elicited.

Administrative improvements that could have been made are indicated by research carried out elsewhere:

- The response rate would probably have been improved had the letter which went out with the questionnaire done more to establish rapport with the respondents. For example, it could have been addressed to them by name rather than as 'Dear Sir/Madam'. Similarly, a longer explanation of the purpose of the survey would, perhaps, have been better - a simple explanation that it was intended to find out their training/educational needs as a preliminary to developing means of satisfying them by designing courses and made materials and delivering them where they, the

clients, wanted them could well have boosted the level of response.

- A system of follow-up letters would also have tended to boost the response levels.

APPENDIX C: DETAILS OF HOME-VISIT INTERVIEW SURVEY

Administration

The second approach to survey work was a home-visit interview using the original questionnaire which was completed on the spot. Trained interviewers (the Community Enterprise Programme research workers) visited all of the residual population of 709 who were traceable.

The target subjects were grouped in batches of approximately 25 according to their location in relation to main roads and bus routes. Illegible and incomplete addresses were checked against the Electoral Register and/or the Telephone Directory.

Cards were made out for each subject giving the name, address, postcode and CODOT number.

Interviewers identified themselves - they carried identity cards - and explained the purpose of their visit. Steps were taken to establish rapport as quickly as possible and to dispel any suspicion that existed, e.g. that the interviewer was from the Jobcentre. Some persistence was required before some of the subjects would participate. There were a number of non-respondents.

Non-response

Non-response fell into two main categories, true non-responses and 'out of scope' responses. The table below shows the various reasons for, and frequency of, each of these categories.

TRUE NON-RESPONSES	%	OUT OF SCOPE	%
Refusals	17.2	Deceased	2.1
No contact established	13.6	Moved from Coventry	12.5
Untraceable address	1.5		
Moved - address unknown	40.5		
Others	12.6		
	85.4		14.6

The total non-response rate, including both categories, was 27.9%.

A number of reasons were given for refusing to take part in the survey:

- respondent very ill
- retired, so it doesn't apply
- not unemployed any longer
- too busy
- doesn't wish to give personal information
- bitter about job-hunting and resents filling in forms
- nothing in it for respondent
- spouse refused on behalf of respondent
- respondent co-operative but spouse objected

Response

The respose of the home-visit interview was 43.1%, although these had already had 29.1% 'creamed off' the sample by the postal survey. The combined response rate of 72.2% falls within the range of acceptable levels, indeed a figure of 80% is rarely exceeded.

Conclusions

The major conclusions to be drawn from experience of home-visit interview survey work were:

- There are a series of problems concerned with the timing of home visits, such as the times of day to call and the day of the week most likely to get a response: for example, 'signing on' days are not good.

- There are some problems in defining criteria of what constitutes a dead address which have to be resolved: for example, how many times a house call should be made.

Where the respondent has difficulty with, or cannot understand, English it may be possible to use the services of a friend or relative as an interpreter. Care must be taken to reduce any bias introduced by this process.

APPENDIX D: COUNSELLING

An integral part of this project was a process of counselling which occurred during every phase. It was felt that this emphasis was needed since, because of increasing diversity, ambiguity and pressure in society, the individual finds it difficult to understand and to cope with the changing nature of society. The unemployed are particularly vulnerable in this situation.

Lack of clear definition is a major problem when considering what is meant by 'counselling'. Three major definitions appear in the literature: the provision of a range of information; guidance in making choices; and 'counselling' remedies to problems.

The provision of information is one of the most commonly quoted functions of counselling. The most important provision occurs via dialogue with students and this can only occur if an appropriate communication style is used. The easing of administrative problems is less frequently mentioned, perhaps because good teachers have always carried out this function.

Guidance is probably the most widely occurring aspect of counselling to appear in the literature. By guidance is meant the process of helping individuals to make decisions which will lead to their constructive development.* The provision of suitable contacts in a range of circumstances can be a central counselling role, as are identifying alternative courses of action,

---

*See Tutoring, FEU, 1982 (now published by Longman). A range of approaches to counselling were used in individual cases. The variables most manipulated were: the format of counselling, the time factor, the source of provision, and the environment in which it took place.

and help with assessing various factors such as capability and progress. Assisting the individual to make choices is another important aspect of counselling, especially when considered in terms of facilitation. The exploration of ideas is one of the least mentioned and, for adults, one of the most important aspects of counselling. This is especially true of the ideals of 'self' and the disruption of personal identity caused by unemployment.

Supportive intervention for unemployed people often occurs within the family circle and, in our experience, a great deal in peer groups. Support is also a necessary feature of teaching in order to approve, confirm and/or validate the sense of worth of the client.

Counselling in in-depth survey interviews

Seventeen people were interviewed individually as a result of the initial survey. Each interview lasted for about an hour, and most of the individuals were between 20 and 34 years old. Almost all of this group were interested in obtaining a qualification. Most of them could be directed towards existing courses; a number were signed on microcomputer courses, two were put in contact with the tutor of the Open Access course. One was referred to Coventry (Lanchester) Polytechnic and one remained undecided. One investigated the MSC 'Enterprise' Scheme. The remainder were allocated to GCE 'O' and 'A' level courses. All the clients appeared satisfied with their counselling and five clients have returned from time to time for further help.

Some counselling occurred, in an accidental manner, during the door-to-door survey. This was largely concerned with the provision of information and contacts.

POSTSCRIPT

Recent national initiatives such as REPLAN and the MSC's Adult Preparation Training programme in the Midlands have given further emphasis to the need for counselling and guidance support for adult groups. After the conclusion of the project, the college set aside a room in a prominent position near the entrance where the adult unemployed could seek advice and support. Discussions have been held with the Careers Service to explore the possibility of setting up a Job Library in the college with some careers officer support which would strengthen this aspect of the provision.

The Department of Community Education has appointed two staff under the Community Programme to increase its contact and lines of communication with adults in the community. It is hoped, therefore, that a position will be reached where the adult unemployed are convinced that the college has much to offer them and that advice and counselling is readily available to them, as and when they require it.

A limited number of extra copies of this report are available from

Publications Despatch Centre,
Department of Education and Science,
Honeypot Lane, Canons Park,
Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ

Board of management

Chairman
J G Owen CBE, Chief Education Officer, Devon

Members
J W Ballard, Association of Principals of Colleges
Association of Colleges for Further and Higher Education
J A Barnes, Business and Technician Education Council
City and Guilds of London Institute
Royal Society of Arts
J A W Deboo OBE, Confederation of British Industry
R J Hartles CBE, Association of Metropolitan Authorities
T P Melia HMI, Department of Education and Science
J Monks, Trades Union Congress
J O Morris, Association of County Councils
I Randall, Manpower Services Commission
L J Rees, Welsh Joint Education Committee
C R Walker, Department of Education and Science
A F Warren, National Association of Teachers in
Further and Higher Education

Observers
Dr F D Duffin, Department of Education, Northern Ireland
J Howgego, Scottish Education Department
K McWilliams, School Curriculum Development Committee
P C Webb HMI, Welsh Office Education Department

Secretary
Jack Mansell, Chief Officer, Further Education Unit

Objectives

The objects for which **The Further Education Unit (FEU)** is established are to promote, encourage and develop the efficient provision of further education in the United Kingdom and for that purpose:
a) to review and evaluate the range of existing further education curricula and programmes and to identify overlap, duplication, deficiencies and inconsistencies therein;
b) to determine priorities for action to improve the provision of further education and to make recommendations as to how such improvements can be effected;
c) to carry out studies in further education and to support investigations of and experimentation in, and the development of further education curricula and to contribute to and assist in the evaluation of initiatives in further education;
d) to disseminate and publish information and to assist in the dissemination and publication of information about recommendations for and experiments and developments in further education.